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INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

POLITICAL FORCES IN INDONESIA

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
23 July 1966

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM*

Political Forces in Indonesia

Summary

The army holds ultimate power in Indonesia and seems likely to do so for the foreseeable future. Although army commander Lieutenant General Suharto and other military leaders are willing to permit a voice to non-Communist civilian political elements, they hope to limit the activity of these many civilian organizations to a level that will not endanger the general policy lines developed since the abortive coup attempt by leftists last October. These groups, however, can be expected to strive both to influence the army and to assert themselves independently.

Civilian political forces in Indonesia include the Moslem parties, especially the Nahdatul Ulama; the small Christian parties; the so-called "action commands" and youth groups, many of which overlap; nationalist parties, of both the center and the left, which include Sukarnoist elements; various labor, farm, and other groups organized generally on functional lines and for the most part affiliated with political parties; and the now-banned Communist Party (PKI) and its front organizations.

The reins of government currently are in the hands of a temporary triumvirate consisting of

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Suharto, Foreign Minister Adam Malik, and the Sultan of Jogjakarta. The composition of the new cabinet scheduled to be formed sometime before mid-August 1966 should give further clues as to how Suharto, the leading figure in the triumvirate, plans to handle Indonesia's political forces. National elections are to be held within the next two years.

Indonesia's most pressing problem at the moment is more one of economics than of domestic politics. The basically poor economic situation has not improved since the military ascendancy last October, and in some respects has worsened. Unless this picture improves, political deterioration could follow.

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Background

1. For 20 years President Sukarno dominated Indonesia and both at home and abroad virtually personified the country. His consistent movement toward the left and toward authoritarianism strengthened the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) and gradually silenced anti-Communists and moderates. By September 1965 Sukarno appeared about ready to take the nation into a modified version of Communism.

2. The Indonesian Army, although anti-Communist, was loyal to Sukarno and reluctantly followed him in his leftward course. Army leaders had only two hopes for halting Indonesia's slide into Communism. One was that Sukarno would die and the army could then assert itself against the PKI. The other was that the PKI would take violent action against Sukarno or the state, thereby justifying army retaliation.

3. On 1 October 1965 a group that called itself the "30 September Movement" kidnaped and murdered six top army generals, including the army commander, announced a Revolutionary Council, and declared the cabinet dismissed. This coup attempt was quickly crushed by the army, however, under the leadership of Suharto, who declared himself acting army commander. The army took advantage of the PKI's involvement in the "30 September Movement" to charge that the Communists were totally responsible for the coup attempt. The army then proceeded to crush and later to ban the PKI.

4. Army leaders initially believed they could persuade President Sukarno to ally himself with the anti-Communist drive. When Sukarno early mounted an effort to reverse postcoup trends, the army found it necessary to launch a gradual campaign to reduce Sukarno's authority and prestige. This effort reached a climax on 11 March 1966 when Sukarno, reluctantly and under military pressure, granted the equivalent of executive power to Suharto. Suharto's "11 March powers" were confirmed on 21 June by the nation's highest policy making body, the provisional congress (MPRS, the Provisional Consultative People's Assembly).

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5. In its anti-Communist, anti-Sukarno effort, the army received the active support of many civilian organizations. Although most of these groups were motivated in part by anti-Communism, they were also eager to reassert themselves politically. They viewed the army as an instrument to return them to national and provincial power.

Political Life in Indonesia

6. There are three dominant factors in all Indonesian political life--religion, nationalism, and socialism (or Marxism). Each political party tends to stress one of the three, but at the same time is influenced by the other two. Sukarno talked of fusing the three into a single theme which he dubbed NASAKOM (an acronym formed from the Indonesian words for nationalism, religion, and Communism). In the interest of national unity, some Indonesian elements, particularly in the army, today speak of NASASOC (nationalism, religion, socialism).

7. The most widely used political rallying cry, however, and one which is acceptable to all, is "Pantjasila" or the "Five Principles." These were enumerated by Sukarno in 1945 and were proposed and subsequently used by him as the basic philosophy of an independent Indonesia. The Five Principles, as usually translated, are nationalism, internationalism, democracy, social justice, and belief in one God.

8. Geographically Indonesian political life is centered in Java, where 65 percent of the population is located. Political leaders, however, carefully watch the other major islands (Sumatra, with 16 percent of the population; Celebes, with 7 percent; Borneo, with 4 percent) for reactions to Java developments.

9. Except when provided with a specific target and strong guidance, Indonesian non-Communist parties have generally demonstrated a lack of self-discipline and national purpose. During the 1949-1958 period of parliamentary government, the various party leaders exhibited far more interest in political maneuverings than in the task of government. Sukarno justified the phased imposition from 1958 onward of "guided

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democracy," claiming that the parties' irresponsible behavior under "liberal democracy" had not only failed to advance the nation but had even contributed to disunity.

10. Sukarno restricted the number of parties and reverted to the 1945 constitution, which provided for a presidential cabinet and downgraded the role of the legislature. Indications are that Sukarno's restrictive line in these respects will be generally retained by the army.

11. There are now eight recognized political parties. Political life is also characterized by an interlocking array of party affiliates, "action commands," and functional groups. Indonesians, under whatever constitution or government, have consistently demonstrated a tendency to subordinate laws and institutions in favor of improvisation and practical solutions. Suharto appears to be trying to use the constitution and available political institutions to the extent he feels is practicable.

The Army

12. Present army leaders believe the army has a political mission of guiding and shaping the Indonesian state during these still formative years. These officers participated in the creation of an independent Indonesia 20 years ago and consider themselves more dedicated and equally, if not better, equipped than most of their civilian counterparts to guide the nation. In the past, the military--like Sukarno--had little patience with the non-Communist political parties which, during the period of parliamentary government, spent their energy in jockeying for power. Present indications are that the Indonesian Army, although differently oriented, will impose a "guided democracy" similar in many ways to that of President Sukarno.

13. Suharto, commander of the army, nominally ranks fifth among the six deputy prime ministers who compose the cabinet presidium of the present interim government. For all practical purposes, however, he is Indonesia's principal leader and has been the guiding force behind most domestic political action and

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policy decisions since 1 October. Although not a "political general" prior to the abortive coup, he appears to have the intuitive political approach of the successful Javanese leader. His political orientation, and that of the army generally, is toward secular nationalism.

14. Within the army, however, are strong Moslem, leftist, and pro-Sukarno elements. Suharto has had to cope with and accommodate these groups within his own organization in order to ensure the military strength and loyalty necessary for the larger task of maintaining a cohesive nation.

The Nahdatul Ulama

15. The Nahdatul Ulama (NU) is the largest party in Indonesia. This Moslem party's greatest following is in East Java, but the NU is strong throughout Java and in North Sumatra and parts of Borneo. Its present prominent position results from the proscription of the Communist Party, the temporary disorganization of the pro-Sukarno National Party, and Sukarno's ban in 1960 of the Masjumi, another large Moslem party.

16. The NU is relatively provincial in outlook and has a record of opportunism and corruption. It is intrigued with but has never pressed hard for a theocratic state. The party has wavered repeatedly since 1 October as to its policy toward Sukarno. The recent session of the MPRS was well stage-managed by the army, however, and the NU fell into line on most issues.

17. Like most parties, the NU has an array of youth, labor, women's, cultural, and other affiliates. The most active of these is ANSOR, a youth organization which in precoup days took a more forthright anti-Communist position than did its parent organization. In the postcoup period, ANSOR assisted the army in the Communist purge and in many instances pursued a Communist blood-letting campaign on its own.

18. The party is led by Chalid, who holds the relatively empty position of Second Deputy Prime

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Minister in the national cabinet. Chalid is in disfavor with the army and may be replaced in the next cabinet by the NU's first deputy chairman, Mohammad Dachlan.

Pantjasila Front

19. In the early postcoup period, an NU deputy chairman, Subchan, spearheaded an effort to form an alliance of anti-Communist parties and organizations. The result was the Pantjasila Front, a Subchan-led confederation of ten organizations (seven political parties, a social service organization, and two labor federations). Its initial purpose was to assist the army's anti-Communist campaign and to persuade Sukarno to accept the new political line. Its early action involved the coordination of youth activity for demonstrations and physical assaults on Communist targets. The organization of the "action commands" in December, however, drew away some of Subchan's youth cadres.

20. As its reason for being is gradually accomplished, the Pantjasila Front appears to be losing its cohesiveness. The NU, and particularly Subchan, probably will try to keep the Front alive as a means of assisting the NU politically and publicizing Subchan. Despite these efforts, the Pantjasila Front seems unlikely from now on to play a substantial role.

Other Moslem Parties

21. Two small Moslem parties are the Islamic Union Party (PSII) and the Movement for the Expansion of Islam (PERTI). The PSII is the larger and the older of the two and is active principally in Java. PERTI's chief strength is in Sumatra. The two parties have consistently shown a strong propensity to follow major political trends as a means of survival. Both long ago made their peace with Marxism and both parties include individuals who were once willing to cooperate actively with the PKI. After 1 October, both were quick to denounce the Communist Party. The PSII, in particular, makes an effort to take a position on all issues that is politically acceptable to the army.

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22. One of the NU's major concerns is the resurgence of the Masjumi. Although still banned, the Masjumi is active through a number of its affiliates--which were never proscribed--and through the Muhammadiyah, a politically active social service organization. The Masjumi and Muhammadiyah represent a modernized approach to Islam and a Westernized approach to politics. Their leaders hope either to reactivate the Masjumi or to form a new Moslem party based on the Masjumi's former following. The decision to do either or neither, however, rests with the government--i.e., largely with the army.

Christian Parties

23. The Catholic Party and the Christian Party (Protestant) are small but have traditionally had at least token representation in the government. Since for many years their membership was on the average better educated than that of the Moslem or nationalist parties, they were able to participate at a high level despite their small size. Though concerned over the possibility of Indonesia's becoming a Moslem theocratic state, both parties have generally found that they had more in common with other religious (Moslem) parties than with the secular nationalists or the leftists. The Catholic Party has been more active in recent years, and particularly since last October has had a better record of anti-Communist action than the Christian Party.

24. One of the leaders of the Christian Party, Johannes Leimena, is First Deputy Prime Minister in the present interim cabinet. He is, however, little more than a figurehead and it is doubtful he will be in the next cabinet.

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he is also resented for having served Sukarno, albeit passively, for so many years.

The National Party

25. The secular National Party (PNI) regards Sukarno as its founder and has popularized and perpetuated itself largely by identifying with him. In Indonesia's only national elections--held in 1955--it

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polled the largest number of votes, but since then it has lost some of its following to the Communists and the NU. Whether it can now recapture some of the following of the proscribed PKI remains to be seen.

26. The PNI's moderate wing, members of which were removed from party leadership only a year ago, now controls the party. The left wing, which has slavishly followed Sukarno and is Communist penetrated, still has considerable strength in East and Central Java, the areas of over-all PNI strength. In Central Java, the party's particular stronghold, it has been estimated that the PNI is split 50-50 between the two wings.

27. During the past three months vigorous pro-Sukarno and leftist PNI sentiment has surfaced in both East and Central Java. Strongly pro-Suharto army commanders who were appointed to both provinces in late June are now moving to suppress persistent pro-Sukarno elements. These suppressive measures, combined with the Javanese tendency to compromise, are likely in time to submerge the left wing. This leftist nationalist sentiment will remain a potential, however, for any leader who is able to exploit it.

28. Ruslan Abdulgani, a member and sometime leader of the PNI, is Second Deputy Prime Minister, a near-figurehead position, in the present interim cabinet. Although not clearly identified with the PNI right wing, Abdulgani is closer to it than to the left. Although Abdulgani probably will not be included in the next cabinet, PNI right-wing elements presumably will be represented.

29. The PNI has adhered to a philosophy imposed by Sukarno called "Marhaenism," a fuzzy doctrine of Marxism modified to serve the Indonesian situation. This Marxist definition of Marhaenism has fallen into disrepute, and PNI leaders are now stating that Marhaenism is the same thing as Pantjasila.

Other Nationalist Parties

30. The Association of Supporters of Indonesian Independence (IPKI) is a small army-oriented

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party founded in 1954 by General Nasution, a former army commander and now chairman of the MPRS. Its principal strength is in North Sumatra and West Java.

31. Partai Indonesia (Partindo) is a small leftist nationalist party which was Communist penetrated almost from its inception in 1958. The army has banned Partindo and its youth affiliate in East Java where the party has its major following. Elsewhere in the country Partindo apparently is under surveillance and is generally inactive.

Non-Communist Left

32. No recognized party is presently available to the non-Communist left. Two parties, both small and both now proscribed, formerly absorbed some of this element. These were the Murba (Proletarian) Party, banned in 1965, and the Socialist Party (PSI), banned in 1960. The revocation of the ban on both Murba and the PSI has been discussed in government circles. Apparently as an alternative to such a step, a move is under way to form a new leftist party. During the recent MPRS session a small group of about 20 persons surfaced as "Pantjasila Socialists." This group is said to be the first step toward the development of a "democratic socialist" movement. Adam Malik, a deputy prime minister, foreign minister, and a leader of the proscribed Murba, is behind the new movement.

33. Subsequent to the appearance of the Pantjasila Socialists, the MPRS outlawed the "propagation of ideology or teaching of Communism/Marxism-Leninism in every form." Whether this will restrict the development of "democratic socialism" remains to be seen. The MPRS decree does indeed appear to have been partially motivated by the Moslem parties' desire to thwart Malik's efforts as well as by their intention to block a possible comeback by Sukarno.

34. In any event, the non-Communist left has never had a large organizational following in Indonesia despite the pervasive interest in "social justice" and the strong influence of Marxism. Possibly the religious and nationalist parties included enough socialism in their major appeal to render a specifically leftist

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party unnecessary. Only the militant idealists and the Marxists who could not accept Communism, therefore, would require an organization particularly tailored to their needs.

35. Adam Malik, aside from his personal interest in a leftist party, speculates that an organizational outlet must be provided for the millions who formerly followed the PKI and its front organizations but who probably had only a vague understanding of Communism.

Sukarno and Sukarnoism

36. Still pervading Indonesian political life are the prestige and mystique of President Sukarno. Sukarno, who proved himself a mass leader of extraordinary skill, remains the popular symbol of the Indonesian revolution and the embodiment of national pride. The significance of Sukarno in emotional terms to the average Javanese--particularly in East and Central Java--remains great. All this is over and above Sukarno's specific political appeal, which has a strong attraction for the PNI and was useful to the Communists.

37. Army leaders, well aware of the real difficulty of destroying Sukarno's political image, deem it unwise to mount a total campaign against the President. In their view, it is essential to national pride, national unity, and the nation's history to preserve a favorable image of the country's revolutionary leader and first president. Moreover, most army leaders believe that in many respects Sukarno did contribute greatly to the nation. Despite their difficulties with him, they feel a certain pride in and sympathy for him themselves.

38. The MPRS has revoked a 1963 decree that made Sukarno president for life. His term continues until an elected congress chooses a president, and that is probably at least two years hence. In the meantime Sukarno is unlikely to make a comeback, but he will continue his efforts to obstruct army policy.

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Action Commands and Youth Groups

39. Last December as the anti-Communist campaign began to slacken because of a diminishing target and as Sukarno continued his efforts to reassert himself, the formation of "action commands" began. These were pressure groups formed by various organizations and segments of society to promote the army's postcoup objectives. Their formation was in part, at least, encouraged by the army and Adam Malik. The most active were the two student fronts--KAMI (University Students Action Command) and KAPPI (Secondary School Students Action Command). Although composed chiefly of the student affiliates of various religious political parties, the commands' motivation seemed broadly nationalistic rather than narrowly political. Their repeated demonstrations were an important, perhaps a major, factor in events last March which led to Sukarno's grant of power to Suharto and to the formation of a new cabinet later the same month.

40. Smaller but also an effective command is KASI, the Scholars' Action Command, which is strongly influenced by the proscribed Socialist Party (PSI) and which frequently has worked directly with KAMI and KAPPI. A number of other commands or fronts have been organized--KABI (labor), KAWI (women), KAGI (teachers), KATI (farmers), even a KAPNI (businessmen). In April a loose coordinating body for the commands was established--KOSTRAM. It flourished only briefly, collapsing both from internal difficulties and opposition exercised by the Pantjasila Front. Now a second coordinating effort is under way, the Consultative Body of Action Commands (BMKA). One of its purposes apparently is to develop an organization which can contest the elections. So far, KAMI has refused to participate. The major action commands are sometimes collectively referred to as the "Generation of '66."

41. Apart from the action commands, several youth groups have acted independently. ANSOR, the NU youth affiliate, took anti-Communist action both before and after the attempted coup. In East Java it has taken a strong anti-PNI and anti-Masjumi posture. Pantjasila Youth, an affiliate of IPKI, was

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active in the Communist purge in North Sumatra. The HMI, (Moslem University Students' Association), a Masjumi affiliate and the largest university students' organization in Indonesia, maintained a remarkable record of political activity during the Sukarno era and has continued it in the postcoup era. It also functions through KAMI.

42. The PNI's university students' affiliate is the GMNI (Indonesian National Students' Movement). PNI factionalism is reflected in a similar split in the GMNI. In some areas, right-wing GMNI elements are working with KAMI. In parts of East and Central Java, however, left-wing students are still challenging, sometimes violently, moderate civilian groups. Partindo's student affiliate, GERMINDO (Indonesian University Students' Movement) was active through mid-March of this year in behalf of Sukarno, and as late as May its East Java headquarters apparently was a center for clandestine PKI activities in the area. GERMINDO is now banned in East Java, but its members presumably will work with Communist youth to develop an underground organization.

Functional Groups

43. The precise political exploitation of these groups fluctuates in Indonesian political life. For the time being they are closely tied to the action commands. They are categories of society, such as labor or farmers, and initially they were intended as genuine representation of these elements. Inevitably, however, they have become associated with political parties or have been sponsored by the army.

44. Sukarno began to use them in the early post-independence era as a means of increasing the representation of specifically oriented areas of political life. They can also be used to balance elements within a given party's following. Functional groups, as such, have seldom been politically active. They are exploited by political activists within their general political sphere.

Communist Party

45. The Indonesian Communist Party has been reduced to an underground organization of unknown size.

Indications are, however, that fewer of the national and provincial leaders were destroyed or imprisoned last fall than was originally claimed, and within recent weeks party literature was reported being circulated clandestinely in East Java. Nevertheless, army controls are such that the party's effectiveness as a national political force is likely to be virtually nil for the next few years.

46. Before 1 October, the PKI claimed a membership of 3.5 million. PKI front groups, even considering overlapping and exaggerated figures, may have accounted for another 15 million. As a result of the purges and proscriptions, most of this membership presumably has withered away. Indonesian officials have suggested a residual party membership of 100,000. The future political behavior of the unattached millions who formerly followed the party remains an open question.

Cabinet

47. General Suharto is holding discussions with various parties and groups toward the formation of a new cabinet before 17 August 1966, Indonesian independence day. Rumored versions of the cabinet generally provide for a first minister and five deputy first ministers who would preside over five general departments and some 15 to 20 portfolios. Indications are that Suharto will be First Minister, that he will retain Adam Malik and the Sultan of Jogjakarta, and that at least one deputy post each will be given to the NU and to the PNI. Suharto would prefer a cabinet primarily of technicians, but some accommodation with Sukarno and the political parties seems unavoidable. Possibly the action commands will be represented.

Elections

48. By MPRS decree, national elections are to be held sometime in the next two years, i.e., before July 1968. The law governing those elections is as yet unwritten, but the MPRS has decreed that it be prepared in the next six months. Preparations for elections are being supervised by General Nasution, who is a strong proponent of active army participation in government.

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49. Two bodies will be elected--the congress, which decides policy, and the parliament which legislates. Presumably the army would prefer that members of these bodies be in part elected and in part appointed. The army may feel compelled, however, to accommodate the parties in their desire for fully elected organs and then find some other means to control them. Once a new congress has been chosen, it will elect--as stipulated by the constitution--a president and vice president.

50. Of the various political elements in Indonesia, only the Nahdatul Ulama is pushing for early elections. It regards itself as favorably situated and would prefer to hold elections before the PNI can reorganize itself and before a possible new Moslem party can develop a following. NU officials seem to think that any time in the next 18 months would still be in a favorable time range.

51. Indications are that elections, at the earliest, will not be held before late 1967.

Outlook

52. There seems little doubt that for the foreseeable future the army can exercise superficial control over political forces in Indonesia. The ultimate political problem, however, seems not to lie so much in military-civilian relations as in the pervasive effect on the total society of the nation's economic problems.

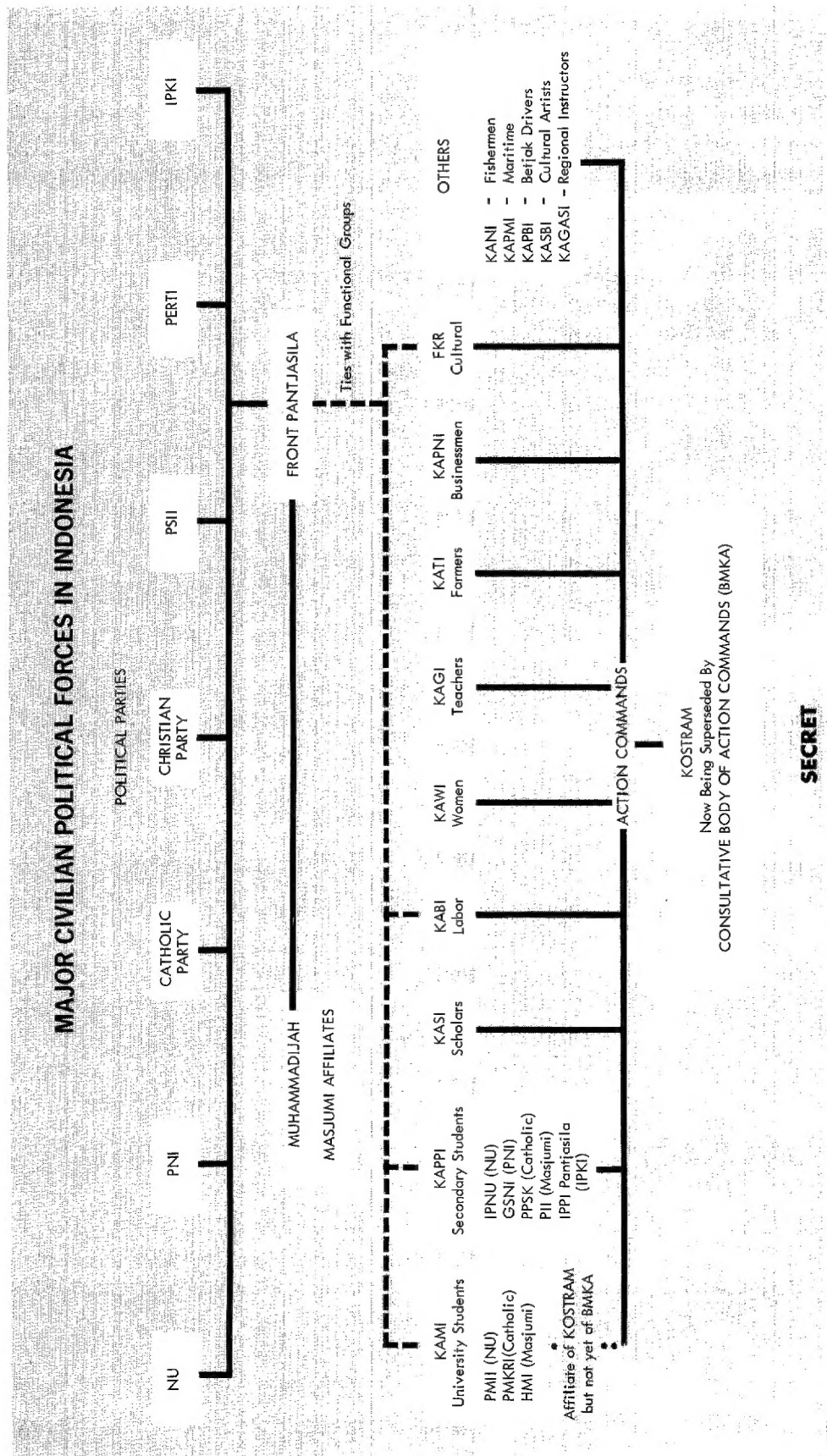
53. The economic situation has not improved since last October; in some respects it has further deteriorated. Rising inflation with its multiple causes and attendant ills is still attributed to Sukarno and those who advised him in the pre-October period. Unless effective remedial action can be developed, any one of several political twists in the next few years seems possible. These could include the development of an antiregime atmosphere exploitable by the political parties, coup-minded army officers, and extreme nationalist and Communist elements. Such an atmosphere could provoke political chaos or a complete army takeover and a return to authoritarianism.

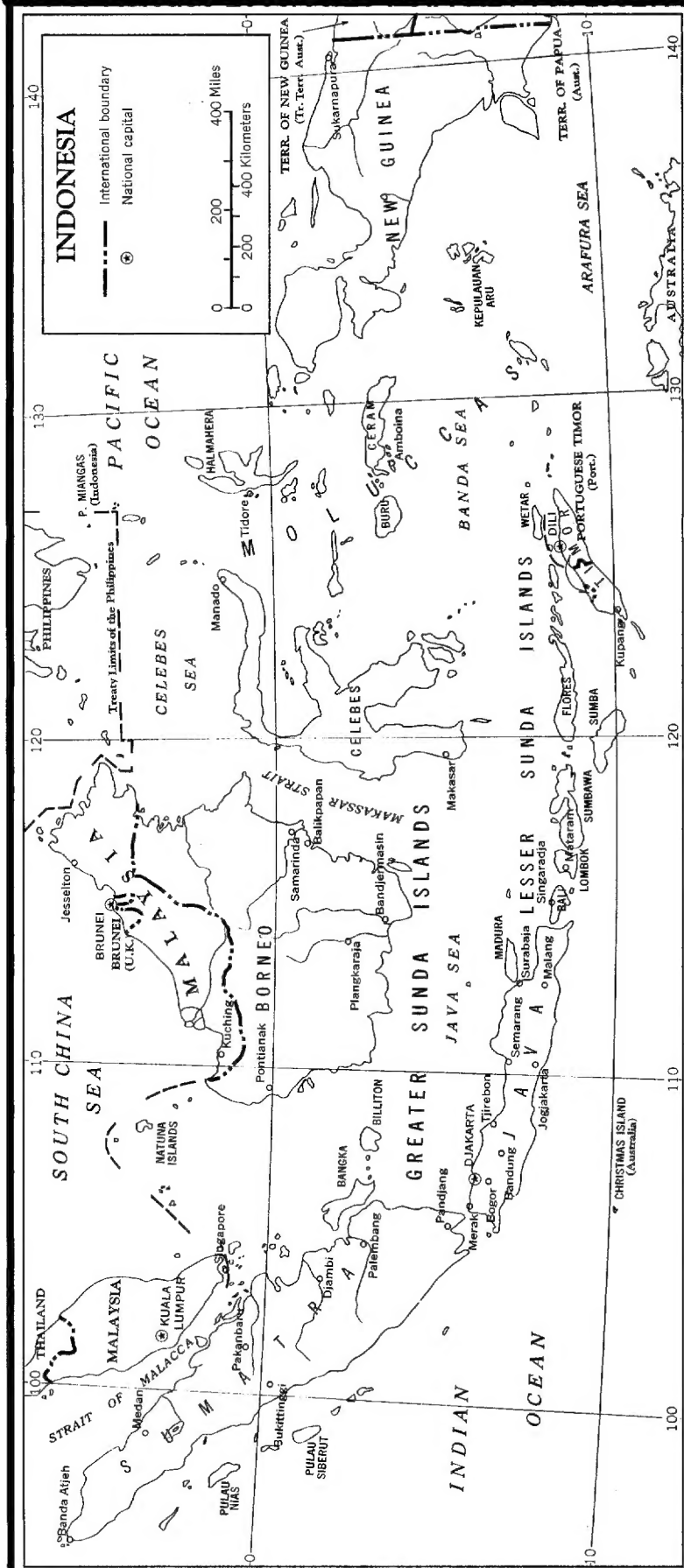
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54. Army leaders appear to be aware of these possibilities. Suharto in particular seems to be trying to make gradual progress in all directions. Domestically he is pursuing a partial return to constitutional government, the maintenance of some political controls, an accommodation--within the framework of army policies--of the wishes of the various non-Communist groups, the gradual reduction of Sukarno's power, and the continued suppression of the Communists. On foreign policy he is resuming friendly relations with the West and has sharply disengaged from Sukarno's pro-Peking policy. Least progress has been made in the economic realm, but even here Suharto and his colleagues have curtailed injudicious domestic spending and have negotiated limited credits from several Western nations. Suharto and those around him, both military and civilian, base their hopes for economic progress largely on an infusion of foreign aid as a boost toward long-range stabilization and the improvement of the country's economic base. (Map and Chart)

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